

Seeking Rabbinic Candidate

Congregation Schomre Israel, a Modern Orthodox synagogue in Poughkeepsie, New York, is looking for a warm and energetic Rabbi who will use his unique efforts to sustain our Shabbos and weekday services, promote Jewish education, social activities and programming relating to Jewish holidays and events.

Poughkeepsie is a small city located in the midst of a larger community in Dutchess County in the Mid-Hudson Valley region of New York State, approximately 70 miles north of New York City. The congregation was founded in 1888 and has remained intact as a traditional synagogue with minyanim and life cycle events. It has been lead by a full-time rabbi in order to better serve our community's needs and to help us continue to grow. Our present Rabbi will be retiring at the end of the summer of 2019 to move to Israel with his family and the congregation hopes to be able to build and expand on the progress made by him and his predecessors.

About Schomre Israel

The Synagogue is located in a quiet residential neighborhood. The congregation is made up of approximately 100 members, along with a number of less-involved, yet fairly regular attendees. Of these, only a handful would self-identify as shomer mitzvot; on the other hand, we have a very strong commitment to learning and self-improvement. The range of Jewish observance levels, in the context of a traditional synagogue, gives the synagogue a unique warmth and welcoming feeling to those who attend services. Currently we get minyanim every Shabbos mornings, with a total attendance of about forty people, generally. We have regular weekday minyanim for Shachris and Maariv and try to make yahrtzeit minyanim as needed for members of the community, as well as visitors to the area. Our sanctuary can hold up to 200 people for services with room to expand in the adjoining social hall and we have a smaller Beit Midrash with a quite extensive library.

Schomre Israel's small size can be an advantage to the enthusiastic and motivated rabbinic candidate; as the sole leader of this synagogue, he has significant responsibility, but also flexibility and lack of constraints in developing new directions for the shul. We are looking for a full-time person who will sensitively take the helm, and help the synagogue develop a vision for the growth into the future, with the support of his congregants.

Qualifications

General Rabbinic Qualifications

Our ideal candidate will be a dynamic leader with a broad appreciation of different approaches within Torah, as well as secular interests. Most of the people who come to Schomre Israel programs and services are not traditionally observant. The Rabbi's job will require maturity, creativity, sensitivity, and sophistication in addressing the needs of this community. He also need to be respectful, a good listener, and someone who is dedicated to yashrus in both his public and private life. We are not looking for a particular "flavor" of Orthodoxy; rather, a Torah

scholar who is committed to fostering tefillah, learning and spiritual growth. The rabbi must be a competent Baal Koreh and Baal Tefillah.

Rabbinic Duties

Specific Responsibilities will include:

Layening

Serving as the halachic authority for Schomre Israel

Teaching several adult education classes per week

One-on-one learning with members of the community

Working to increase the size of our minyan while making services engaging and meaningful

Answering halachic questions (including taharas hamishpacha) and general religious and spiritual guidance to members of the community

Helping build membership and fundraising

Coordinating and organizing shul events

Visiting the sick, officiating at life-cycle events, and other normal pastoral duties

Working with others in the broader Dutchess County Jewish community (e.g., the Chevra kadisha, community-wide events, etc.)

Education/Teaching

We seek someone who can develop innovative and engaging classes and programs that will provide real Torah content and attract new faces. Poughkeepsie has a very diverse community, with people of widely ranging observance levels, Jewish knowledge, and backgrounds. The successful rabbinic candidate should be comfortable engaging with people where they are and helping them find and grow along the path that is right for them. Our congregation is primarily an older age demographic. However, within our immediate region of the Mid-Hudson Valley are located several outstanding colleges, including Vassar, Marist, Bard, The Culinary Institute of America and The State University of New York at New Paltz. The region is home to several annual music festivals, art galleries, museums and historic sites. Schomre Israel is the only Orthodox synagogue in the region; in addition, there is a Conservative synagogue, several Reform and Reconstructionist congregations and several Chabad activities.

Pastor Care/Counseling

Our rabbi must be willing to make himself available to congregants, and to listen, counsel, and provide advice when possible.

Organizational/Administrative Skills

The Rabbi is responsible for providing the weekly e-mail newsletter and a printed bulletin with commentaries bi-monthly. The congregation has a committed Sisterhood with a core of enthusiastic and skilled volunteers, who run many events and fundraisers, cook for special Yom Tov meals, prepare kiddushes and maintain our website. Our ideal rabbinic candidate might relieve some of that burden from our volunteers, while also having the community resources and

infrastructure to begin to develop new programming ideas as well as to creatively foster increased exposure and broader community participation and growth.

Housing

The synagogue owns a comfortable single-family house an approximately 10-minute walk to the shul which would serve as the parsonage for the rabbi.

Compensation

Salary will vary based on experience.

How to Apply

Please submit a resume and cover letter explaining why you feel you are a good fit for this community, and why this community is a good fit for you. Review of applications is now in progress and will continue until the position is filled, with a target start date no later than September, 2019.

For more information about our community, you can visit our website, www.schomreisrael.org.

You may direct questions regarding the application to the chairman of the search committee, Jack Zand at jackzand@aol.com or by telephone to (845) 255-1556.